(e) and (f) In order to consider the problem of arrears of cases in Courts and find out ways and means to deal with it as expeditiously as possible, a meeting of Chief Ministers and Chief Justice of the High Courts was held on 4th December, 1993, under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The resolutions adopted in the Conference have been commended to all the State Governments/UT Administrations and High Courts for necessary action. The Administration of Justice has been made a Plan item with a view to removing infrastructural bottlenecks coming in the way of expeditious disposal of cases.

मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त का दर्जा

2407. **श्री वीरेन जे. शाह :**
श्री राम जेठमलानी :

क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 15 जुलाई, 1994 के "दि इकोनोमिक टाइम्स" में "कैबिनेट मिनिस्टर रैंक लाइकली फार शेषन" शीर्षक से प्रकाशित हुए समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह सच है कि सरकार मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त के पद को केबिनेट मंत्री का दर्जा देने पर विचार कर रही है ; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में ब्यौरा क्या है और सरकारी पदानुक्रम में मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त का वर्तमान दर्जा क्या है?

विधि, न्याय और कंपनी कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री हंसराज भारद्वाज) : (क) जी हां । सरकार को तारीख 15-7-94 के "इकोनोमिक टाइम्स" में प्रकाशित समाचार की जानकारी है ।

(ख) ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव सरकार के विचाराधीन नहीं है ।

(ग) इस समय मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त को, भारत के नियंत्रक-महालेखा निरीक्षक, भारत के महा न्यायवादी, मंत्रिमंडलीय सचिव आदि के साथ अग्रता अधिपत्र के अनुच्छेद 11 में सम्मिलित किया गया है ।

Photo Identity cards to voters

2408. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any State Government have moved as per the Election Commission's direction to provide photo identity cards for voters in States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken any decision on the State Government's requests to bear a major part of the cost involved in the matter; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) According to information available with the Central Government, the States of Manipur, Meghalaya and Haryana have started issuing photo identity cards to electors. In Andaman and Nicobar Islands, first and second stage of photography of the voters in all polling stations have been completed and printing of identity cards is in progress. In Maharashtenders have been floated and the agencies for undertaking work would be finalised by mid August, 1994. In Chandigarh, the work of issuance of photo identity card is scheduled to begin from 11.8.94. In Sikkim, an agency has been identified for taking the work of preparing the identity cards, Paper for the scheme has been purchased and printing work done.

(c) According to directions of Election Commission, Central Government is to reimburse 50 per cent of the expenditure incurred by the State on the issue of photo identity cards.